

5378

5 G.R. S.W.1

Thurs:

20/9/17

My dear Mr Becker,

I am much  
ashamed for not having written  
sooner, but for a wonder there  
is some excuse for me. I am  
working at the War Office (a  
branch at 5 Cork Street), nominal  
hours 10 to 6, but everyone works  
overtime and so I feel I often  
must follow suit. It is German  
of course and, though interesting,  
very brain-fagging; one's free  
hours are few as you see, and  
one often arrives home too weary

To cope with much correspondence.  
We have one free day in the seven  
and I take Friday, but now that  
the term has begun I fill it with  
what pupils I can keep together,  
in order not entirely to lose my  
connection. I expect I shall  
quite enjoy the teaching as a change.  
Many congratulations to you on  
mastering the variations; I doubt  
whether I could do it. There are  
various irregularities in the rhythm,  
some of which I like for instance  
the extra beat in the repeat bars  
of the 1<sup>st</sup> variation when they lead  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup> time respectively to the  
2<sup>nd</sup> part of the tune and the next  
variation. I don't want the D to  
be D $\flat$ , but very likely my taste is

bad. In the 5<sup>th</sup> bar of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part  
of the 2<sup>nd</sup> variation my Peters edition  
has a D $\sharp$  in the 2<sup>nd</sup> soprano; as  
the  $\sharp$  is repeated in the very next  
chord it is probably a printers error  
and should be either D $\flat$  or B. I  
prefer the latter. But I'm afraid  
these variations are beyond my musical  
taste and I should have been regard-  
ed with great contempt by v. Bülow.  
The other night I went to Morley  
College to sing Weelkes' madrigals.  
They certainly are most delightful  
and though every body - some 20  
to 30 - was sight-reading, they  
were all excellent and the pitch  
never sank in the least. I was  
lent a copy marked "Ramsbotham"  
and the owner of it was very like  
the Pageite, who used to play the

piano so well. Has he a London living now or is he at the Charter-house? There was not a chance of speaking or I should <sup>have</sup> liked to do so.

Saturday  
the 29<sup>th</sup>

I am rather glad there has been more delay over this, as my brother stayed with me on the 21<sup>st</sup>. He had been taking his eldest boy, my godson, to Charterhouse for the first time. He has gone into Lattin's house, as L. and Eden were at the school together. Curiously enough, though Eden is of scholarship standard and my sister-in-law is a woman with brains far above the average, this boy is very slow and has only with difficulty got into the

offer shell. He wanted to go into the navy and was ploughed over the medical, a great disappointment to his parents. He was a ~~17~~ 7 months child and his mother had a dreadful time before his birth, so perhaps that accounts for it. But both these boys have been delightfully trained by their parents, (very unlike most of my nephews and nieces,) and all who know him think very highly of his character.

We are having what one cannot but describe as a very uncomfortable time with air-raids and for the last hour and a half there has been a tremendous noise from our guns. Above it all one can hear the engines of the

-ways asks for "the unfinished" after-  
-wards. I also at intervals play  
Palestrina's "Stabat Mater" to myself;  
if one crosses thumbs and fingers,  
one can get the part leading fairly  
satisfactorily. I fancy if I set  
to work to learn the Beethoven varia-  
-tions my view of them would be a  
very different one, but I feel I shall  
never attain your deaf appreciation of  
him in his philosophical moods.

Always yours affectionately,

H. G. S.

I was a bit comforted this afternoon  
by one of the officers at tea saying  
that I must have a very clear head  
to continue writing a letter during the  
display.

Gothas, if they are within half-a-  
-mile or so. Our sbrapnel bricks  
through the air and the aerial tor-  
-pedoes make a curious whining  
noise. The dog next door howls  
without ceasing and our cat goes  
into a dark corner. Thanks good-  
-ness! my housekeeper is a perfect  
"brick" and keeps bright and cheery  
though naturally somewhat excited.  
I find I cannot calmly continue  
playing the piano, so sit down  
and write letters. I must be  
a great coward, as I find it quite  
uncomfortable; but I am ashamed  
of myself when I think of the  
people in the firing-line. I think  
hearing the machines without being  
able to see them is what affects  
one, and I must say

the streets are absolutely empty  
on the occasions.

However I thoroughly enjoyed the  
spectacle on Monday; the criss-cross  
of all the search-lights, the converging  
pattern of the bursting shrapnel and  
our aeroplanes with flash-lights made  
a magnificent picture, one that I  
should have been sorry to miss.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>

There is another raid on. At this rate  
I hope I shall soon get accustomed.  
My principal musical food lately has  
been Bach's organ fugues still. I  
have been down to Hertsam every  
week until the middle of ~~Sept~~, and  
used to do them with my hostess  
taking the pedal part. She has a  
great enthusiasm for them now; but  
her husband finds them dry and al-